

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Final Official Action mailed April 07, 2004.

In the present paper, Applicants have amended claims 6, 8, 22 and 24 and have canceled claims 1-5, 7 and 10-21. Claims 6, 8, 9 and 22-25 are now presented for the Examiner's consideration in view of the following remarks.

*The Drawings*

In the Final Official Action, the Examiner has repeated the objection to the drawings made in the initial Official Action mailed March 12, 2002. In that objection, the Examiner states that there is an inconsistency between the original informal drawings and the later-filed formal drawings. Specifically, the Examiner correctly notes that the informal drawings were missing a FIG. 3. The Examiner further correctly notes that the formal drawings filed on 11/22/1999 are also missing a figure, but that FIG. 4 of the informal drawings corresponds to FIG. 3 of the later-filed formal drawings.

In response to that objection in the initial Official Action, Applicant prepared a Request for Approval of Drawing Corrections accompanying the Amendment of May 20, 2002. The Examiner has indicated that the Applicant failed to submit the proposed drawing correction in the response. A copy of the Request for Approval of Drawing Corrections, together with the proposed drawing changes, is attached.

Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed drawing changes fully address the Examiner's objections. In those changes, formal FIG. 3 has been renumbered FIG. 4 to correspond with the originally-filed informal drawings. A new FIG. 3 has been added. All

drawing sheets have been renumbered to reflect the increased number of sheets. Applicant further submits that no new matter is added.

New formal drawings corresponding to the corrected sheets will be prepared upon approval by the Examiner and allowance of the application.

### *The Claims*

The Examiner has indicated that claims 6, 8, 9 and 22-25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Claims 6, 8, 22 and 24 have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 9, 23 and 25 are each dependent on one of the rewritten claims, and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as the parents. All rejected claims have been canceled.

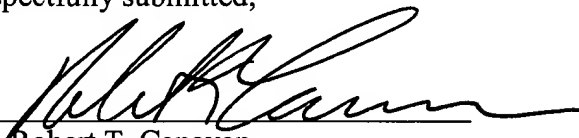
A fee transmittal sheet authorizing the payment of fees associated with the added independent claims is submitted herewith.

### *Conclusion*

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that all rejected claims have been cancelled, and that claims 6, 8, 9 and 22-25 are allowable. The application as a whole has now *prima facie* been placed in condition for allowance. Applicant earnestly requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowance.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present case, the Examiner should not hesitate in contacting the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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